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The Continued “MySpacing” of Facebook: Banner Ads, Layouts and Sneaky Plugin Installs

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September 2, 2011

by [Mike Holder](#)



For those of you who have been wondering “what’s up with Facebook” with all the hanging up and hiccups the past several days, today’s experience on Facebook by millions revealed why. Facebook now has banner ads. Facebook, the company that prided itself of the “user experience” and not allowing banner ads on its pages had changed its tune, and now has banner ads.

Big ones. Gaudy ones. In both columns to the right and left of the pages. Inline in the timelines of people’s posts. And on the bottom of the page.

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The image displays three vertical banner advertisements side-by-side.

- Left Banner:** Features a large dollar sign icon and the text "PRICE is right". Below this is a "Play Now" button. A vertical stack of numbers (65, 15, 100, 5, 90, 50) is shown, with "90" being the largest and most prominent. At the bottom, it says "LivingPlay.com" and "About this ad".
- Middle Banner:** Contains the text "Tired of this annoying ad? Mouse over to blow it up!" at the top. Below is a large image of a person's midsection with the text "Lose 20 pounds in 5 minutes!!". At the bottom, it says "About this ad".
- Right Banner:** Starts with "You've got 1 friend request" and a small icon. Below is a section for "Vicky 2 friends in common" with a photo of a woman. It asks "Want to meet me?" and has "Confirm" and "Ignore" buttons. At the bottom, it says "About this ad".



I first knew something was up when I went to my RockMelt browser and none of the Facebook pages would display correctly...totally illegible. So I went to my old Mozilla standby and was greeted to the above banners on all the Facebook pages.

So I clicked on one of the "About This Ad" links below one of the ads and found out who had partnered with Facebook to place these banner ads: a company called Redford Media. On the page that came up after clicking the "About This Ad" link (<http://www.redfordmediallc.com/atapr.html>) the company defended itself stating what they were all about. The line that really got to me was, "At Redford our ultimate goal is to enhance the end users' web browsing." experience.

Really? "Enhance" my browsing experience? The advertising was not compatible with my RockMelt browser, and in every other browser I used (IE, Mozilla, Chrome) pages loaded extremely slow, sometimes timing out. How delusional! It is more a hindrance than an enhancement, guys!

Come to find out that Redford Media has partnered up with a company called PageRage. PageRage is a company that designs "layouts" for Facebook pages (See how "MySpace-y" this is getting!). So I look under the links on the upper left on my page for "Wall...Info...Photos...Notes...etc." (under my profile pic) and there are two new links – "Add A Layout" and "Remove Layout". The plot thickens!

So, I read on the Redford Media "About This Ad" page that they are in partnership with this PageRage, and offer a link that takes you to a webpage (<http://www.pagerage.com/disable/>) where you can remove the PageRage links from your page by removing a "plugin" from your browser. How did the plugin wind up on my browser in the first place? I didn't put it there.

So I do the "remove" on the PageRage web page, and voila! No more "Add A Layout" / "Remove A Layout" links. Yet the ads remain. So then I see another "partner" on the Redford Media page above

called "DropDownDeals". What? More "plugins" I didn't install??? I click on that link for removal (<http://www.dropdowndeals.com/settings>) and turn those things off. Voila!!! The ads are now gone!

With Google+ so prevalent with tens of millions of users already, Facebook is trying some desperate moves to stay in competition...like the recent newly added "inline privacy" feature to go head-to-head with Google+'s "circles". But banner ads and layouts??? Installing plugins unbeknownst to the end user without their knowledge???

I joined Facebook 5 years ago to get away from MySpace's gaudy banner ads and layouts. Why would I want them now on Facebook? Right now MySpace is a breath away from folding into oblivion because of moves like what Facebook pulled today. Why would you want to do the same things that drove people from your former competition to drive them to a new hot player on the social networking scene – Google+?

Word of the wise to Mark Zuckerberg: "If it ain't broke (and it 'ain't'), don't keep trying to fix it."

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1. *Pc Tips And Tricks – How to Remove In-Feed Facebook Ads Caused by Malware*

September 10, 2011 at 5:56 PM (UTC -4)

[...] a preview of that—this is a plugin you'll want to remove from your computer, and thanks to fellow blogger Mike Holder, we now know [...]

Comments have been disabled.

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